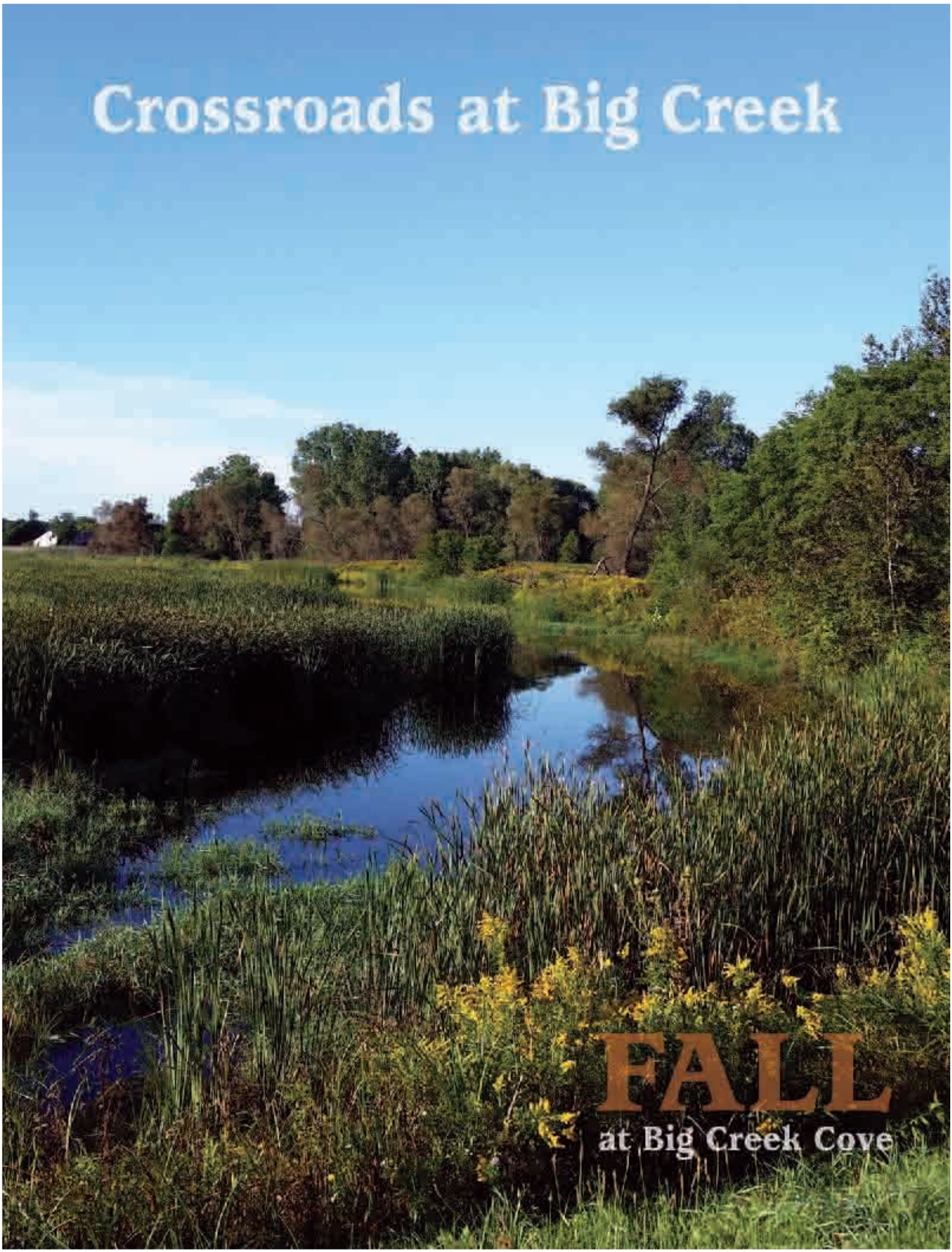
Crossroads at Big Creek



Crossroads at Big Creek, Inc. - Scientific, Historical & Environmental Learning Preserve Vol. 13, Issue 2 - Fall 2015

CROSSROADS AT BIG CREEK inc.

Crossroads at Big Creek *is a preserve for experiential lifelong learning focused on science, history, and the environment.*

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2041 Michigan St.
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920-746-5895
CrossroadsAtBigCreek.org

Getting it Done

Visiting Crossroads this summer, you probably noticed a lot of activity centering around our facilities and trail system. Last spring, we corrected the structural problems on the south side of the Collins Learning Center and finished Learning Space in the Lower Level. What a transformation!

This summer, the trail system at Ida Bay was expanded and recently seeded with grass, which should be sprouting as you read this newsletter. Work also is progressing on the Big Creek Cove. The old dock was dismantled and we hope to replace it next year. Also, not as noticeable, but of significant importance to Crossroads programing, is the establishment of a dedicated area in the Maintenance Building for the "Ski For Free" program.

The obvious question is who has been doing all this work and tackling all these projects? That person is our new Property Manager, Rich Propsom, who just happens to be our neighbor to the east of the CLC on the other side of Big Creek. Rich has a tremendous skill set based on the positions he has held, of which most recently as a Project Manager for Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department. His knowledge of environmental issues, native plant communities, soil and water interactions and his many fabrication skills have already, and hopefully for many years to come, enhanced programing and experiences for all who visit Crossroads.

Speaking of doers and shakers who have contributed to the Crossroads experience, our astronomy leader Ray Stonecipher died this August. Ray was a Door County native who taught astronomy and physics at UW-Whitewater before retiring and returning to Sturgeon Bay. He never turned down a request or an opportunity to give presentations on astronomy to groups throughout the county. His love for astronomy is reflected at our Astronomy Campus with the building that bears his name and that of his wife Ruthie, who preceded him in death. His legacy will shine on for many years by all those that visit Crossroads at Big Creek.

Have a memorable Autumn Season and see you on the trails.

Dick Weidman,
President, Board of Directors at Crossroads

Interactive Archaeology

At Ida Bay Preserve

We invite you to be involved in an archaeological dig!

We knew, long before The Nature Conservancy gave the property to Crossroads, that the Ida Bay Preserve was extraordinary – ancient hemlock and beech forests, mature hardwood and several mixed-aged examples of second growth forest. We suspected that this land, located at the end of the original bay of Sturgeon Bay, might have been the site of an Indian settlement.

Buoyed by the results of the preliminary surveys we conducted on the original Crossroads property (which involved the hands-on participation of about 700 schoolchildren) we wrote grant proposals to do a preliminary survey of the Ida Bay property and were funded for the Phase I work with grants from the Raibrook and Maihaugen Foundations.

Professionals from Midwest Archaeological Consultants focused on the wooded Zenith Street end of the property. They gridded and shovel-tested the parcel at 10 meter intervals. At this point, they have found arrowheads, pottery shards, and flakes and chips in significant quantities to justify systematic digs: one-by-two meter and two-by-two meter test units to retrieve more data and establish historical horizons.

During October, we will dig in two or three test units. While the supervision and identification will be carried out by the professionals, we intend to offer area schools the opportunity to participate, we are offering a teacher education class through UW-GB (which is open to non-credit participants), and we also would like to offer hands-on experiences to adult volunteers during the final week of the month.

To participate, fill out the tear sheet below return in the reply envelope or email to: info@crossroadsatbigcreek.org

Thank You for making this Historical Research possible:

- **Paul and Fran Burton**
- **Dennis and Bonnie Connolly**
- **The Clifford and Clara Herlache Fund**
- **John and Nell Herlache**
- **Historical Preservation Fund of the Door County Community Foundation**
- **Mike and Barb Madden**
- **Maihaugen Foundation**
- **Midwest Archaeological Consultants**
- **Raibrook Foundation**

I Want To Dig!

Name: _____

would like to participate in THE DIG!

I am available (please circle AM or PM):

❍ **Oct. 26** AM PM ❍ **Oct. 27** AM PM ❍ **Oct. 28** AM PM

❍ **Oct. 29** AM PM ❍ **Oct. 30** AM PM

❍ Yes ❍ No Please send information on the ***UW-GB Teaching Archaeology Class***

E-mail address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Donations for "Getting It Done" in 2015

Gifts made from January 1 - August 31

$50,000
Ray Stonecipher

$25,000 - $49,999
1923 Fund

$10,000 - $24,999
Don and Coggin Heeringa

$5,000 - 9,999
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$2,500 to $4,999
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Linda Walczek
Jolene Wilson
Clifford Wind

Donations for "Getting It Done", *continued*

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Roger and Sandy Anderson
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Baylake Bank
William and Jane Berg
Bill and Marie Bertschinger
Rev. Anthony Birdsall
Kathy Brauer
Cindy Campbell
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Ray Stonecipher
John and Nancy Munch
Coggin Heeringa
Madelyn Ostrand

Eldred Urban
Marian and Rod Schlise

Christine Whyatt
Coggin Heeringa

To Celebrate the Birthdays of...

Brian and Joan Wake
Scott Wake

Dee Paulsen
Madelyn Ostrand

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Ask about this new giving opportunity

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C & S Manufacturing
Little Hoppers
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Thrivent Financial -
Jaqueline Szczepanski

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Special Thanks!

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Door County Daily News.com
Door County Environmental Council
Door Property Owners
Guy Fortin
Friends of Crossroads
Lake Michigan Wind and Sun
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Master Gardeners of Door County
Midwest Archaeological Consultants
Dee and Eric Paulsen
Peninsula Pulse
Andrew Pfeffer
Raibrook Foundation
Sturgeon Bay Home and Garden Club
Sturgeon Bay Utilities
Wild Ones of Door County

From Running to Skiing

The 6th Annual Trail Run

by Gretchen Schmelzer, Team Leader

The 6th annual Crossroads Trail Run, which supports Crossroads Ski-for-Free ski program and promotes 'green' living in our community, made a profit of $6,966. The event provided 402 runners, 40 plus volunteers and many spectators the opportunity to exercise outdoors. Research shows just being in nature increases happiness and boosts one's feelings of well -being.

All Crossroads Trail Run proceeds are being used to upgrade the ski equipment and space for the 20 year old, SKI-FOR-FREE program. This winter, every Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 1:00-3:30 while snow conditions allow, people of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to borrow, free of charge, cross country ski and snowshoe equipment. Even though it's still autumn, feel free to visualize our community members and guests, venturing outdoors on Crossroads groomed snow trails to enjoy the winter environment we have in Door County!

Our race team members work year round to pull all aspects of Door County's first and only trail run together. Hats off to - Bobby Deggendorf, Colleen Elliott, Kevin Grohskopf, Theresa Kay-Meredith, Deb Whitelaw-Gorski, Jennifer Lasee, Jason Linzmeier, Jim Maki, John Munch, and Gretchen Schmelzer.

Thank you to our neighbors - the Desotelles, Ostrand, and Herlaches for sharing their land with us for this event.

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

Presenting Sponsor
Ministry Door County Medical Center

Major Sponsors
Evergreen Nursery
Sturgeon Bay Utilities
LAKESHORES Landscape and Design

Maple Tree Sponsors
Animal Clinic of Sturgeon Bay, LLC
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Gretchen & Steve Schmelzer
State Farm Insurance
Target

Water Research at Crossroads

When most people think of Crossroads at Big Creek, trails, school field trips, running and skiing. lectures, classes and special events come to mind. If people don't think research, they should!

Since 2004, Crossroads at Big Creek has provided laboratory space in the Collins Learning Center to the researchers from the Environmental Research and Innovation Center of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh , in collaboration with Door County Health Department and the Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department, have been working (day and sometimes night) throughout the summers to monitor the quality of Door County waters at 31 beaches.

In addition to protecting the health of swimmers by posting beaches, the project included the collection and analysis of beach water data to determine sources contributing pollution to Door County beaches, and establishing a baseline of beach water quality by:

- developing the general trend data to identify main sources of pollution,
- providing insight to the pollution sources for each beach,
- collecting data that will be useful for producing a predictive multivariate model of contaminant occurrences
- studying the microbial concentrations in sand and their effect on beach water
- and determining whether UV light from the sun reduces the presence of microbes in sand.

This year, funded by a grant from the Healthy Water Door County, a fund of the Door County Community Foundation, the researchers operated a county-wide well monitoring program in June. Samples were distributed during the Sustainable Living Fair at Crossroads and returned for testing. The data from this study will serve as a baseline for future research relating to subsurface conditions, nutrient management programs and technology development.

Crossroads at Big Creek is a private 501(c)(3) organization.

Yes! I (we) want to be a part of Crossroads at Big Creek.

Crossroads at Big Creek is a preserve for experiential lifelong learning focused on science, history, and the environment.

Enclosed is a check to help meet the program and operation expenses at Crossroads.

- ❑ $50 Prairie Club
- ❑ $100 Forest Club
- ❑ $250 Wetland Club
- ❑ $500 Big Creek Club
- ❑ $1,000 Hillcrest Club
- ❑ $5,000 Preservation Club

❑ **I would also like to donate $ _____ to:**

- ❑ Furnishings for the Lower Level Learning Space
- ❑ Education & Events
- ❑ Endowment Fund

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____
(if you would like to receive notes on upcoming events)

- ❑ Yes, you may list my name for donor recognition
- ❑ Please do not list my name
- ❑ Please do not send fund-raising materials in the future.

Please make checks payable to:
Crossroads at Big Creek, Inc. PO Box 608, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

CROSSROADS
AT BIG CREEK inc.
SCIENTIFIC • HISTORICAL • ENVIRONMENTAL • LEARNING PRESERVE

Box 608, 2041 Michigan Street
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Crossroads - Volume 13, Issue 2 - Fall 2015

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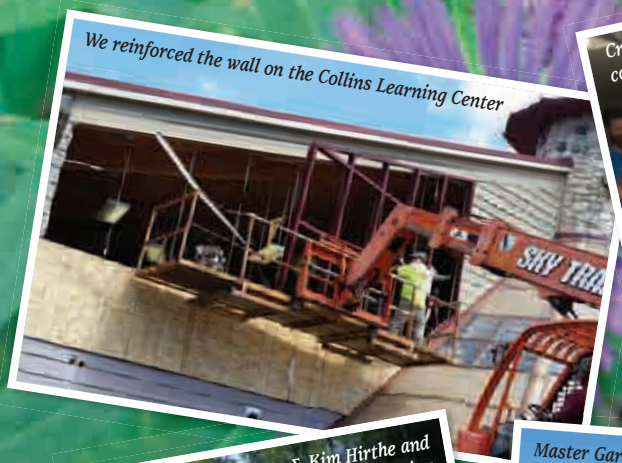
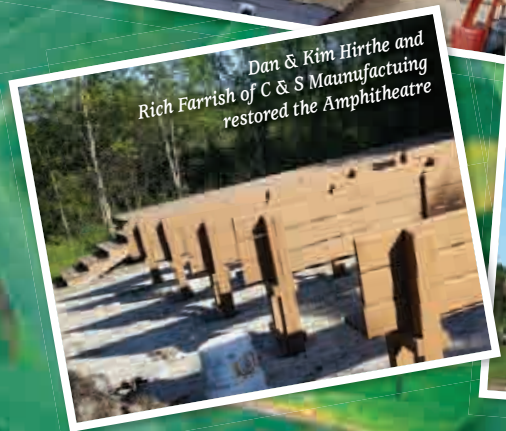
A Summer of Progress



We reinforced the wall on the Collins Learning Center

Crossroads is using the newly completed Lower Level Learning Space

NWTC students assisted Lake Michigan Wind and Sun add solar aray to Maintenance Building



Dan & Kim Hirthe and Rich Farrish of C & S Maunufactuing restored the Amphitheatre

Master Gardners & Door Peninsula Astronomical Society landscaped Stoncipher Astronomy Center

Rich Propsom & Joel Kaminski, with help from Friends of Crossroads created trails at the Ida Bay Preserve

Come See For Yourself